

Thos. Ellis / 5264

A (6)

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the **WORSHIPFUL**
BURGESSES of *Westminster*,
A T
St. MARGARET'S Church,
On *Thursday, April the 18th, 1745.*

Being the Day appointed by Act of Parliament
for the Election of the two Chief **BURGESSES.**

By *JAMES CAWTHORN*,
Master of the **GRAMMAR-SCHOOL** at
Tunbridge, Kent.

L O N D O N:

Printed for C. HITCH, at the *Red-Lion* in *Pater-*
noster-row. MDCCLXV.

[Price Six-pence.]

S E R M O N

Preached before the Worshipful

Burgesse of Wymington

AT

St. Margaret's Church

On Thursday the 17th



Being the Day appointed by Act of Parliament
for the Election of the two Clergymen

BY JAMES CAWTHORN,

Minister of the Grammar-School at
Wymington, Kent.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. Hatch, in the Strand, at the
Sign of the Ship.

Printed the 17th

JOB xxix. 14, 15, 16, 17.

I put on Righteousness, and it clothed me: My Judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem. I was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet was I to the Lame. I was a Father to the Poor, and the Cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the Jaws of the Wicked, and plucked the Spoil out of his Teeth.

IT is a proverbial Saying, that a good Example makes a deeper Impression upon the Mind than the most lively Precepts of Religion. On which account, it should seem, that no Lessons of Instruction more effectually tend to the Suppression of Vice, and the Encouragement of Goodness, than a just Description

of those memorable Personages who have supported the Dignity of human Nature by an exemplary Strictness of Morals, and have generously sacrificed Ease, Life, and Liberty, to the Interests of the Public. Such noble Patterns of Virtue not only give us the clearest Evidence of its real Excellency, but at the same time remove those discouraging Prepossessiones which Men are apt to entertain of the Difficulties of Practice. They awaken in us a vigorous Sense of our Obligations, warm and animate our Bosoms with a true Sublimity of Thinking, and inspire us with a laudable Ambition of copying the great Originals before us.

Convinc'd of the Truth of this Observation, I have drawn from the sacred History, a Character as amiable and majestic as any in the Records of past Ages; a Character that scorns to borrow its Figure and Distinction from the Pageantry of Power or Fortune, but derives them from those surer Indications of Greatness, a genuine Beneficence of Spirit, and an universal Rectitude of Manners: Such was *Job*: His whole Life was formed upon the grand Models of Humanity and Religion; he did Honour to his Nature both in the Palace and on the Dunghil, and

carried

carried the Generosity and Friendship, the Tenderness of Affection, the Impartiality of Justice, and the Disinterestedness of Patriotism to the highest Pitch of Perfection: *He put on Righteousness, and it clothed him, his Judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem. He was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet was he to the Lame. He was a Father to the Poor, and the Cause which he knew not, he searched out. He broke the Jaws of the Wicked, and plucked the Spoil out of his Teeth.* These fine Specimens of an humane and virtuous Disposition, which made him the Admiration of his Contemporaries, and one of the brightest Ornaments of the *Jewish* Annals, will sufficiently justify me for introducing him to the Notice of this august Assembly; since there are no Qualifications which can adorn the Man, the Citizen, or the Magistrate, but what are strongly painted by the Text, in the illustrious Portrait of the great *Arabian*. Give me leave therefore,

First, To open and explain the more distinguishing Parts of his Character,

Secondly, To subjoin some Reflections connected with the Subject, and the Solemnity of this Occasion.

The

The first View of this memorable Man presents us with a noble Image of his strict Adherence to the Laws of Religion upon a true Principle, and the fullest Conviction of their divine Original. Had he been actuated by the Impulse of a false Ambition, a Fondness of Popularity, or an undue Regard to human Authority, all his good Qualities, however beneficial to Mankind, had lost their Merit in a moral Estimation. They might have wore indeed the Complexion of Virtue; but that Complexion had been only artificial, a showy Imitation of those lovelier Beauties which flow from a right Disposition of Mind, and a native Simplicity of Manners. Had therefore the great *Patriarch* liv'd like the fashionable Moralists of our Age, who have resolved the old System of their Forefathers into a certain Elegancy of Behaviour, he had contented himself with Appearances instead of Realities. But he was too honest to play the Hypocrite; he had a strong Persuasion of the eternal Differences of Good and Evil, of the natural Deformity of Vice, and the inherent Excellence of Virtue: He was sensible that the Perfection and Happiness of human Nature was equally the Result of the one, as its Depravity

pravity and Misery was of the other: He knew too that a Conformity to the Will of God, and an exact Observance of his Precepts, were the only Characteristicks of moral Rectitude; and looked upon it as a very momentous Part of his Obligations, to inspire others with the same elevated Sentiments of Religion, by his own public and exemplary Profession of it. On which account, he did not amuse himself with idle, unconcerning Speculations, nor stand contemplating the *Idea* of Goodness with the wild Raptures of Enthusiasm; he did not affect a splenetic Austerity of Behaviour, neither would he suffer his Piety to waste its Lustre amidst the Solitudes of the Desert, but *clothed himself with Righteousness*, as he emphatically expresses it, that he might recommend himself to the Imitation of Mankind, by a visible Display of the Majesty of Virtue.

And as he thus distinguished himself by all the Offices of Self-Government, he shewed an exact and conscientious Regard to the Rights of others in the Decisions of Justice, a Province which he was greatly equal to, by the Splendor of his Station and Circumstances, as well as the Integrity of his Life. In this conspicuous Scene he behaved with so much Honour and

and Magnanimity, and gave so many illustrious Proofs of the Probity of his Conduct, and the Equity of his Determinations, that it procured him a truer Esteem than all the Ensigns of his Authority. The *Robe* and the *Diadem* naturally impress Awe and Veneration upon vulgar Minds, and may in some measure tend to create a public Reverence of the Magistrate; but if these outward Marks of Distinction be not supported by a personal Dignity of Conduct, the whole Solemnity sinks into meer Farce and Mockery, and only serves, like the Microscope, to render a contemptible Insect visible, which would otherwise escape the Eye of Observation. *Wickedness in High Places* may indeed be puff'd up by Flattery, and deified by Prostitution; but if Fortune changes, he is sure to find that every Compliment was a Lie, and every Panegyric wrote upon his Virtues a studied Imposition upon him; for then the high Opinion, the warm Friendship, the officious Zeal, the loud Admiration, the singular Value, and blind Devotion disappear, with the infamous Tribe of Parasites that once ador'd him.

In the next Clause of the Text, this great Man rises to our Imagination, under all the shining Ornaments of Humanity and Benevolence,

volence, and is as amiable in his private Capacity, as he is venerable in his public one. We have already seen him in the Paths of Righteousness, and on the Tribunals of Justice; but *here* we view him amidst the Pomp and Affluence of Prosperity, communicating Assistance, Support, and Comfort, according to the numerous Wants and Exigences of his Fellow-creatures. This is not only a right, but a beautiful Character; it exhibits the finest Images of social Life, and makes the same magnificent Appearance among the moral Virtues, as the Sun does in the Creation: For as the material World, notwithstanding the delicate Symmetry and Proportion of its Parts, would open an uncomfortable Prospect to the Eye, if it were divested of its Lights and Colours, so the Man of Justice and Probity, notwithstanding the real Excellency of his Character, makes but an unlovely Figure among the human Species, unless he be set off and beautified by the additional Graces of Kindness and Generosity. In reality, a beneficent Spirit is a Composition of every thing great and valuable; it exalts our Nature to the noblest Pitch of Perfection, and is the genuine Source from whence the Endowments of the Mind derive their Lustre and Efficacy. For what is there in the warmest Imagination, the most accurate Judgment;

and the most unlimited Capacity, when these Accomplishments are shut up in the narrow Enclosures of a selfish Temper? What Services accrue to Mankind from the military Genius of the *Soldier*, the laborious Researches of the *Philosopher*, or the refined Policy of the *Statesman*, while they despise the sacred Obligations of Society, and prostitute their Abilities to the base Purposes of Avarice and Ambition? Without the friendly Ingredients of Humanity, Courage is Rashness and Brutality, Wisdom becomes mischievous, Power tyrannical, and Religion sinks into Hypocrisy or Enthusiasm.

It would therefore have been a glaring Deficiency in the Conduct of *Job*, if he had not exerted the *Friend* with the same Spirit and Activity that he did the *Magistrate*. A Disregard to the Interests of Mankind, would have thrown a Shade over his Virtues, and furnished Materials for a *Satire*, instead of an *Eulogium*. But he has admirably cleared himself from such dishonourable Suspicions, by leaving in the Records of Scripture eternal Monuments of his Benevolence: A Benevolence! which, diffusive as the Light of Heaven, warm'd, cherish'd, and invigorated the whole Creation around him: A Benevolence! which inspir'd by a tender Sensibility of Distress, and a godlike Ambition

tion of relieving it, explor'd the Obscurities of the Hospital and the Dungeon, and presented Health to the Sick, and Liberty to the Captive: A Benevolence! which gave Instruction to the Ignorant, Reformation to the Profligate, Reason to the Lunatic, Support to the Necessitous, Protection to the Deserving, and Patronage to the Orphan: A Benevolence! which, in his own sublime Expression, *was Eyes to the Blind, Feet to the Lamé, and which made the Widow's Heart sing for Joy.*

Whatever situation of Life Men are in, if they partake of that divine Temper which animated *Job*, they will discover it in proportionable Endeavours to supply the Wants of the Public by a liberal Distribution of kind Services. They will not confine the Offices of Humanity to such unhappy Objects as occasionally move their softer Passions, nor content themselves with giving a small Assistance to a few Individuals, but will study and contrive, with the utmost Solitude, to render their particular Talents extensively useful. Under the Influence of this amiable Principle, the Man of Power and Authority will make it the stated Employment of his Life to rescue Merit from the Scourge of Oppression, to free distressed Innocence from the Hand of

the Destroyer, to vindicate the Cause of the Friendless, to patronize Virtue, and to promote Arts and Sciences, by the public Encouragements of his Favour. He will not suffer the Bigotry of his Sect or Party to lay any Restrictions upon his Bounty, or to confine it within the Barriers of political or religious Distinctions, but extends his Benevolence, like the great Law of Nature, to the whole Community of rational Beings. In like manner, if Knowledge be his more eminent Accomplishment, he will not bury it in the Solitudes of a Cloister, but generously employs it in spreading the beneficial Influences of Reason, by correcting our Prejudices, regulating our Passions, and beautifying our Understandings. He gives Industry a wider Sphere to range in, and is equally studious to improve the Arts of *Mechanism*, as the Speculations of *Philosophy*. Is he bless'd with the Enjoyment of Plenty and Abundance? he scorns to misapply his Riches in supporting the Vanity and Ostentation of Life; he has a Taste too refined and elegant to sacrifice his Fortune to the Delicacies of his Table, or the Magnificence of his Buildings; his Wealth delights him chiefly, as it enables him to relieve the Necessities of the Poor; and while he indulges the noble Generosity of his Spirit, he enjoys all the Charms of Prosperity in a more exquisite

exquisite manner than the Epicure can do in the wildest Scenes of Riot and Debauchery.

Thus far we have opened the Character of *Job*, and have viewed him in all the illustrious Distinctions which arise from the Majesty of Virtue, and the Tenderness of Humanity. But all these amiable and exalted Accomplishments were still heightened in the bright Exemplar before us, by a zealous Attachment to the Interests of Truth, and an unwearied Application to the Discovery of it. Had he been remiss and indolent in his Enquiries, had he contented himself with a superficial View of Things, and thought it a Disparagement to his Genius to attend to the gradual Openings of Conviction, his whole Life must have been one continued Scene of Error and Delusion. The generous Friend, the compassionate Benefactor, the kind Patron, the equitable Magistrate, and disinterested Patriot, would have been as prejudicial to his Country, by the Misapplication of his Virtues, and the Inconsistency of his Behaviour, as if he had acted upon the Suggestions of Pride and Ambition. His Benevolence had been blind and undistinguishing, his Judgment partial and unsatisfactory, and all his Actions had wanted that due

Propriety,

Propriety, that delicate Harmony and Adjustment which gives the Arts of Life their finest Polishing. On this Account the great *Patriarch* employed himself in a calm and dispassionate Study of Truth, and pursued her through the Mazes of Controversy, and the Artifices of Falshood, till he *had thoroughly searched out the Cause which he knew not*, and could justify his Sentiments by all the Authority of Reason. He was very unlike many of the Moderns, who have too much Delicacy to dive into her sacred Recesses, and too little Patience to trace a Subject thro' the methodical Processes of Enquiry, but implicitly acquiesce in the most senseless Paradoxes, by mistaking the Self-sufficiency of Ignorance for the Strength of Demonstration.

It would be infinitely useful to Society, if Men could be taught to entertain such a sincere Affection of Truth, as to make the eternal Distinctions of Right and Wrong, the only Rules of Determination, both in their private and public Capacities. Happy would it be for us, did we admit no Principle, however venerable in the Estimation of the Vulgar, and disregard no Sentiment, however unpopular, till we were perfectly satisfied of the Veracity of the one, and the Falsty of the other. The
Man

Man would then think and behave with becoming Propriety in every Scene of Life; the *Magistrate* would appear in all the Dignity of Character; and every honest Member of the Community would have cause to rejoice, that his Claims and Pretensions were to be measured by the Standards of Equity, and not left to the arbitrary Decisions of misgrounded Opinion.

The last View of the Text presents us with the majestic Appearance of a great Patriot, vindicating the Rights and Privileges of Mankind, against the treacherous Encroachments of Power and Injustice. He did not think it consistent with the Integrity and Benevolence of his Temper, to indulge himself in a lazy Inactivity, and tamely see his Fellow-creatures exposed to the Insolence of Pride, the Tyranny of Oppression, and the Ravages of Ambition; and therefore, with a true Gallantry of Spirit, exerted his Endeavours to guard their Properties from Rapine and Extortion, and their Persons from Insult and Violation: *He broke the Jaws of the Wicked, and plucked the Spoil out of his Teeth.* He discouraged (as it may be inferred from a natural Interpretation of the Clause before us) Vice and Immorality to the utmost of his Ability. Every Species

Species of Guilt, every Degree of Iniquity, however supported by the Figure and Influence of its Confederates, met with a severe Opposition from him : He disarmed it by Reproof and Admonition ; he discountenanced it by the Lustre of his own Example ; and if the gentler Methods of Reformation proved insufficient, he solemnly arraign'd it in the Courts of Justice. Intimidated by no Difficulties, bias'd by no Partialities, influenced by no Considerations of Interest, he ventured to stand up the great Champion of Truth and Virtue, amidst the Discouragements of Power, the Malignity of Factions, the Virulence of Ill-nature, and all the clamorous Impertinence of a licentious Age.

We have now leisurely survey'd this fine Portrait of Virtue in the Behaviour of *Job*, and have successively admired the *Saint*, the *Benefactor*, the *Magistrate*, and the *Patriot* ; I say *admired*—for surely he must have a very dull Imagination, as well as a wretched Depravity of Taste, who can behold this memorable Man acting such illustrious Parts on the Theatre of Life, without being deeply affected with the lively Images of Piety, Justice, Humanity, and Heroism, so expressively delineated in his Character.

Permit

Permit me,

Secondly, To subjoin a few Reflexions connected with the Subject, and the Solemnity of this Occasion.

There is nothing that can give us a sublimer Idea of infinite Wisdom, or a more advantageous Conception of Government, than the Appointment of different Stations among Creatures of the same Species. This Disposition of Things, which places one part of us in a due Subjection to the other, seems admirably calculated for the probationary Scene of human Life, as it exhibits Virtue in a Variety of Lights, and makes room for a more eminent Display of moral Excellence. In Conformity to this happy System, the Wisdom of the Legislature has put this great City under your immediate Jurisdiction, and by that means has given you the noblest Opportunity of imitating the good *Patriarch*, in the most shining Parts of his Character. And surely it must be a pleasing Satisfaction to every worthy Man, who has a true Sense of the State and Exigencies of Society, as well as of his own Obligations to the Public, to be fix'd in such a Sphere of Action, where his Labours and Abilities will more extensively

fively contribute to the Prosperity of his Fellow-citizens, by the Reformation of Manners, and the Support of Regularity and Order. One of this virtuous Complexion will make use of the most vigorous Endeavours to discharge the sacred Trust reposed in him. The Public expects it from him. His Station obliges him to it; and therefore he will be so far from disappointing their Expectations by a lazy Indolence on the one hand, and an undue Misapplication of Power on the other, that he will think it his indispensable Duty to make himself as beneficial as he can, and will study to adorn the Virtues of the Citizen with the Dignity of the Magistrate.

It is, indeed, an Infamy to this polite Age, as well as a peculiar Dishonour to this City, that the united Efforts of public-spirited Men, invested with the Authority of the State, become daily more and more necessary to suppress the shameless Impudence of Vice and Immorality. Fenc'd in, as we are, by the Efficacy of good Laws, and the Majesty of a wise Government; guarded from the Broils of domestic Animosity, and the dismal Apprehension of foreign Invasions; secure of Property, Protection, and Freedom; and, above all, exquisitely blest'd by the strongest Coalition

Coalition of Civil Policy with Religion, we might reasonably expect that every *Englishman* would, of himself, strengthen the Power and Interests of his Country, by the additional Security of his own private Virtue. But instead of defending the goodly Structure of our Constitution by a national Morality, we seem to have entered into a strong Confederacy against it, by extinguishing every generous Impression of Humanity, by sacrilegiously transferring the Empire of Reason to our Senses, by abandoning ourselves to all the execrable Vices of Lewdness and Luxury, and by countenancing such a soft Effeminacy of Manners, as would raise Abhorrence *in the Savages of America*.

Would to God that the black Catalogue of human Vices could find no place in a Description of the Manners of this great City, where the Opportunities of Sin are as numerous as the Temptations to it! Would to God that the moral Distinctions of its principal Inhabitants bore some Proportion to their civil ones; that their Virtues were equal to their Fortunes, and their Behaviour as illustrious as their Equipages! On the contrary, an Affectation of a false Politeness, an useless Prodigality of Dress, a fastidious Delicacy of living, a continual

Diffipation of Thought in unmanly Diversions, are become the Criteria of true Taste, and the only Arts in fashion. Religion has not only lost its wonted Efficacy upon the Heart, but is daily dragg'd by prophane Buffoons before the Tribunals of Ridicule, and publickly treated as the miscreated Offspring of Spleen and Politicks. Debauchery and vagrant Uncleaness have erected their Standards in the Streets, while the professed Advocates of Vice are continually strengthening her Legions by new Auxiliaries, and propagating her Power to the Destruction of Innocence; like the miserable *Athenians*, infected with the Plague, who (as the Historian tells us) enjoy'd a barbarous Pleasure in communicating the Poison.

In these shameless Triumphs of Licence and Disorder, the most publick-spirited Magistrate will find sufficient Employment for all his Vigour and Activity. If he means well, he will be cautious in his Conduct, so as not to exasperate the Fierceness of the Profligate, by an over-rigorous Severity of Punishments, nor to encourage his licentious Behaviour, by letting loose the Reins of his Authority. And that he may have the greater Influence in a speedy Amendment of Offenders, *and walk worthy*

thy of his Vocation, he will endeavour by a well-conducted Course of Life, and an exemplary Strictness of Morals, to support the Dignity of his Character, and, in Imitation of *Job*, *will put on Righteousness*, as well as the Robes of Magistracy. This will not only inspire Mankind with a genuine Esteem and Veneration of his Person, and beget in them an habitual Acquiescence in his Decrees, but will exhibit such a noble Image of the Majesty of Virtue, as will strike the deepest Impression upon their Bosoms. The shining Examples of private Men may, indeed, have a powerful Tendency to discourage Vice and Irreligion, by giving their Families and Acquaintance very amiable Conceptions of Piety and Religion, but the Obscurity of their Lives will not suffer their Virtues to shine with half that Strength and Diffusion as the public Capacity of the Magistrate admits of, who by this means can make the Lustre of his Conduct spread as widely as his Jurisdiction, and more effectually serve the Purposes of Morality, than all the Solemnity that attends him in the Execution of Justice.

The good Magistrate entertains likewise such a strong Sense of Benevolence, such an exalted Spirit of Humanity, such a generous Affection to his Country, that he will
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not suffer any selfish Views to disconcert his Plan of Action, or to stand in Competition with the public Good. He will observe such a rigid Impartiality in the Distribution of Justice, that he will not be bias'd by the Artifices of Persuasion, the moving Strains of Oratory, or the closest Connexions of Affinity. Menaces cannot discourage him, Tears move him, nor Bribery pervert him.

Besides this, the good Magistrate will make use of all proper Opportunities of exposing the Malignity of Vice, and recommending the Excellence of Virtue. Friendly Admonitions, and kind Expostulations, which greatly obtain'd in the first Ages of Christianity, when a native Simplicity of Manners was called true Politeness, are now so universally exploded by a criminal Modesty on the one hand, and a refined Complaisance on the other, that even good and pious Men are deterr'd from the Practice of so disobliging a Duty. But a Person in Authority will be allowed, in despite of the Punctilio's of Good-breeding, to put Men in mind of their gross Impieties, to warn them of the dreadful Consequences of Iniquity, and to suggest the purer Enjoyments of Virtue and Religion. A Remonstrance against vicious Practices, made by
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the Magistrate with becoming Zeal and Gravity, will probably strike deeply upon a wicked Mind, that has before disregarded the most pathetic Exhortations of the tenderest Parent.

Encouraged by these Considerations, and a due Sense of the sacred Obligations of your Office, may you long continue in the vigorous Execution of it. May the Influence of your Virtues, the Splendor of your Example, and the Authority of your Station, successfully contribute to the Suppression of Vice, and the Maintenance of Peace, Regularity, and Order. May no Prejudices of Party, no Servility of Spirit, no undue Attachments to private Interest, ever slacken your commendable Industry ; and God Almighty prosper your well-meant Endeavours. May your Attention to the Public, derive the Blessings of his Providence upon you and your Families here, and the gracious Acceptance of his Favour hereafter.

F I N I S.

(23)

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IN
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